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PETITION OF KINKEAD TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA,
December 1, 1781

[Virginia State Library, Petitions from Washington county, 1776-1860]
TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF
DELEGATES.

The petition of John Kinkeade humbly sheweth That your petitioner was appointed a commissioner by the Court of Washington County, in the room of Evan Shelby, (agreeable to an act of Assembly,) in conjunction with the Commissioner from the County of Kentuckey to Superintend and open a road through the Cumberland Mountains to the open country of Kentuckey. — and although Dangerous and difficult as the Task was, at that Critical Juncture, the Business was Completed so that waggons has passd, and has rendered much ease and Expedition to Travelers, etc.

Your Petitioner therefore beg that your honourable house will take his Case into Consideration, and make him such allowance as will be Just and adequate to his service.

And your petitioner as in duty bound shall pray.

THE FRENCH SETTLERS AT GALLIPOLIS

The copy of the following letter has been sent the managing editor by Mrs. Charles P. Noyes of St. Paul, Minnesota, a descendant of the writer. Joseph Gilman of Exeter, New Hampshire, became a member of the Ohio Company and was later appointed one of the judges of the Northwest territory. There are in existence several letters of his written during this period. The following letter concerning the French settlers at Gallipolis gains a particular interest from the discussion of the Scioto speculators by Mr. Hulbert, which is concluded in this issue of the REVIEW. The recipient of the letter was the Hon. Nicholas Gilman of New Hampshire.

MARIETTA 6th January 1793.

DEAR SIR

I shall make no apology for troubling you with this Letter, your own benevolent heart will apologize for me the moment you are informed that the Subject of it is in favour of Strangers who have been grossly imposed upon by some Speculating Americans. As you have been for a long time at the Seat of Government, you must have heard that Certain persons calling themselves the Scioto Comp^a, by their Agent Mr. Barlow in France sold large tracts of land in this part of the Country

to a number of Gentlemen there, describing the same by a Plan there shewn as beginning nearly opposite the Mouth of the Great Kanawa and extending down the River Ohio to Scioto River, this Land was sold at a high rate and (as I am informed) one half the purchase sum was paid down in Specie, and for the remaining half Bills of Exch^a were drawn or such other Security given as makes it highly probable the whole, or far the greatest part of the purchase sum has been paid — In full confidence in the Right of the said Comp^a to dispose of said Lands a number of respectable Gentlemen embarked bring with them numbers of Servants to whom they promised Lands in consideration of their Service when the term of their Service expired, with provisions & Cloathing in the interim — In this Situation they arrived here, and began (two years ago) a settlement at a place named Gallipolis, and perhaps no people were ever more industrious in clearing building &c &c in a new Country than they were, till on compleating the Survey of the Ohio Company's purchase it was found to include not only the Ground where their Town stands but also a great part of the lands purchased of the Scioto Company. This news was nearly fatal to the Settlement, most of the Servants leaving their Masters, giving as a reason that they would not be able to give them the Lands agreed upon at the expiration of their Service. Notwithstanding every discouragement, a number of the principal Gentlemen have had the fortitude to remain on the Ground flattering they should have been secured in their titles by an exchange of Lands between the two Companies of Scioto and Ohio — or a purchase from the latter by the former Comp^a, which last it is probable would have taken place had it not been for the failure of Mr Duer, but this has set them all on flote — and in this distressed situation they have determined to apply to Congress for relief. Two of their Agents Monsieur De Rome and Monsieur Vandelbergen are now here on their way to Phil^a they are both men of good Characters (well known in this County to which Gallipolis belongs), and as such my dear Friend permit me to introduce them to you. They have not any particular plan, but mean to petition Congress generally unless otherwise advised when they arrive at the Seat of Government. Mon^s de Rome Speaks good english, and appears to me too well bred to be troublesome. He will give a true relation of their present situation and the various gradations that have led to it. I have confined myself to simple facts, the general Government is fully adequate to redress all wrongs — Nor do I mean to include all the persons who are Associates in the Scioto Company many of whom are Gentⁿ of known and acknowledged worth, but the immediate Actors have my utmost detestation.

I believe you never received my last letter, but as it only related to

my Family and private concerns tis of no consequence. I only mention it to assure you no Letter of yours has been neglected.

I wish I could write you anything new or that would be agreeable from this distant part of the world. But it is from you we are to expect news. We are constantly on our guard, tho' no damage has been done for some months past — at night we fasten our Gates and generally are confined at home for the night. We have neither poverty nor riches, so have no reason to repeat the prayer in Proverbs but on the whole are contented with our Lot, which perhaps is really preferable to that enjoy'd by far the greatest part of mankind. My two Grandchildren are looked upon as none such here, I mean by Grandma' & Ma' — The oldest is a prattler and by the multiplicity and odness of her questions, is sufficient amusement when confined at home. The boy is about 6 months old, is a fine hearty child, and bids fair (should he live) to make a substantial Farmer, the honestest and most independent of all callings.

I suppose by General Putnam who is to leave this place soon for Phil^a you will receive a number of Laws, made for the Government of this Territory, the Summer past; I wish you would critically examine y^m There are some of them which want explanation and others not founded on any Laws of the original States, and contrary to that general Liberty which every man in every free Government has a right to, particularly that prohibiting the sale of foreign Articles except by persons licensed, this Law has a direct tendency to encourage monopolies, which ought to be carefully guarded against in every & especially in all new Countries — I wish you would consult Mr Livermore on this Act.

My family join their most cordial wishes for your health & happiness with Dear Sir Your humble Servant

J GILMAN